

Texas; President Fidel Castro of Cuba; President Vojislav Kostunica of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro); and Presi-

dent Vicente Fox and former President Ernesto Zedillo of Mexico. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Statement on Signing Proclamations for the Vermilion Cliffs and the Craters of the Moon National Monuments

November 9, 2000

Today I am pleased to sign proclamations extending greater protection to two irreplaceable pieces of America's natural and cultural heritage, the Vermilion Cliffs in northern Arizona and the Craters of the Moon in central Idaho. With this action, nearly one million acres of unique natural and historic resources already in public ownership are fully protected.

The Vermilion Cliffs monument covers 293,000 acres of Federal land on the Colorado Plateau in northern Arizona. Humans have explored and lived on this geologic treasure since the earliest known hunters and gatherers crossed the area 12,000 or more years ago. California condors, desert bighorn sheep, pronghorn antelope, mountain lion, and other mammals roam the canyons and plateaus.

The expansion of the Craters of the Moon monument, originally created by President Coolidge in 1924, adds 661,000 acres of volcanic craters, cones, lava flows, caves, and fissures of the 65-mile-long Great Rift, a geological feature that is comparable to the great rift zones of Iceland and Hawaii.

With these proclamations, this administration continues its commitment to preserving and restoring America's natural treasures, from the Florida Everglades to the California redwoods, for this and future generations.

NOTE: The proclamations are listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Statement on the Dedication of the National Japanese-American Memorial

November 9, 2000

Earlier today America honored the patriotism of Japanese-Americans during World War II with the dedication of the National Japanese-American Memorial in the Nation's Capital. Attorney General Janet Reno and Commerce Secretary Norman Mineta joined distinguished members of the Japanese-American community and Americans of all ancestries in reminding us of a time when this country lost sight of the very foundations of democracy it was defending abroad.

This Nation must never forget the difficult lessons of the Japanese-American internment camps during World War II and the inspirational lessons of patriotism in the face of that injustice.

Today I have directed the Secretary of the Interior to develop recommendations to preserve

existing internment sites and provide for their public interpretation. In addition, I am signing legislation designating the United States Federal Courthouse for the Western District of Washington in Seattle, Washington, as the William Kenzo Nakamura United States Courthouse. William Nakamura was a student at the University of Washington when he and 120,000 other Japanese-Americans were removed from their communities and forced into internment camps. Despite the injustice of his internment, William Kenzo Nakamura volunteered for the U.S. Army and died fighting for this country in Italy on July 4, 1944. In June of this year, I posthumously awarded him the Medal of Honor in recognition of his courage and heroism.

As the Nation prepares to honor its veterans, it is my hope that the unique contribution of